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CHANGING DYNAMICS OF JAPANESE RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

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Introduction

Relations between Japan and African nations have never been close.[1] Various factors account for the lack of interaction between the two areas, including geographical distance, cultural differences, and Japan and Africa's particular relationships with the powers of Europe and the United States. Yet, interactions between African states and Japan have existed since World War II. Relations between Japan and Africa have been shaped by three main factors: first, the influence of the major colonial and Cold War powers on Japan and Africa; second, Japan's world view, which spurred the nation to become a major superpower through nonmilitary means, and, third, Japan's view of itself as a nonwhite power which has through its strength overcome the adversity of a hostile world system and therefore has little understanding of those countries of Black Africa that have remained in the world's periphery. This article will explore how these factors have formed Japan-Africa relations during the late 1960's, when Japan experienced an incredible economic boom, and the early 1970's when Japan's world goals and strategies were altered by the two oil shocks during this period.

Previous examinations of Japan-Africa relations are extremely few in number and have focused mainly on the changes in Japanese trade and aid policies towards Africa. For instance, Ichiro Inukai discusses how after the oil crises in 1974 Japan began to increase the amount of aid given to Africa.[2] Inukai explains that aid is given to Africa for two main reasons. First, Japan gives aid in return for vitally needed natural resources and commodities. Second, there is a true humanitarian spirit still alive in Japan, and Japan often gives aid to Africa in order to help alleviate poverty and the problems caused by violence. Yet, both the influence of the pressure placed on Japan by the United States to more

actively participate in world affairs and the influence of Japan's particular world view on its aid policy are not specifically discussed. S. Olu Agbi focuses mainly on trade and aid relations between Japan and Africa because, as he explains, other types of relations, such as diplomatic and political, have been extremely limited. Agbi does show that often these economic relations are political in nature because they are given in order to help secure needed natural resources and commodities to help maintain Japan's powerful position in the world.[3] However, Agbi does not delve specifically into how the international political, economic, and social context have affected Japan's aid to and trade with Africa.

Recent books and articles published by Japanese academics have criticized Japan's Africa policy, saying that, although Japan has greatly increased the amount of foreign aid in recent years, the assistance is given in the context of a lack of a proactive set of goals. Therefore, the purpose of foreign aid and of Japan's Africa policy in general remains undefined and relations remain distant. Kazuyoshi Aoki says that Japan's policy towards Africa fits into a fifty-year pattern of a Japanese foreign policy based on trial and error rather than on specifically defined goals.[4] Hideo Oda also points out that, although consciousness of African problems has increased in Japan since the 1980's, Japan's Africa policy is not specifically stated. This vagueness, Oda states, may be due to Japan's fear of becoming increasingly active in Africa after the criticism Japan received because of its continued trade with apartheid South Africa during the economic boycott.[5] However, these authors do not delve specifically into why Japan-Africa relations have remained distant through time.

These authors neither specifically address the importance of the international context on Japanese-African relations nor do they examine how Japan's view of itself and its role in the world influence its interactions with countries of the South such as those in Africa. Japan since before it closed off its relations with nations of the West in the seventeenth century has perceived its role in the world as a vulnerable yet potentially powerful one. It has struggled to become a great power in order to not be subsumed by the strong forces of Europe, the United States, and China. Additionally, Japan has greatly influenced and altered, although not proactively, the dominant modes of thought about possible successful paths to development prevalent in the world.

Africa's particular role in the global political and economic structure also affects international relations and thought, particularly with

respect to alternative conceptions of the state, the nation, and economic and political development. Africa is an area of the world which was first ravaged by colonial division and dependency and then by civil and regional wars and by international debt. It has been and remains tied to the international system which utilizes its natural resources, supports or overthrows its political leaders, and dictates structural adjustment measures which often are not compatible with its history and present political and economic systems. Africa and Japan have had different experiences that are related to their interactions with the international system created and led by the United States and Europe, but both areas have been and continue to be strongly tied to this world system.

In order to examine the nature of Japan's interactions with Africa, it is important to analyze both their direct interactions and their indirect relations as affected by their dealings with the international political and economic system, their world views, and their views of themselves. These factors combined with the direct and indirect aspects of Japanese-African relations begin to explain the reasons why Japan has remained relatively inactive yet economically powerful in Africa.

The Cold War Framework

From directly after World War II until the mid-1960's, relations between Africa and Japan were almost nonexistent. Yet, this period is still vital to the study of Japanese-African relations. The independence and nationalist movements in Africa began to form the structure and course of intra-African relations, relations with present and soon-to-be-former European imperial powers, and Africa's role in and perspective on the world. In Japan, defeat in World War II, post-war occupation by the United States, continuation of some of the pre-war attitudes towards the world, and the push for postwar reconstruction combined in the formulation of postwar Japanese foreign policy.

The drive for African independence and the resulting postcolonial entities left Africa with the huge task of determining its future course while attempting to deal with the colonial legacy. As Europe and the United States became embroiled in the East-West battle

of the Cold War, the power struggle had great effects on an Africa pushing towards development. The demand in the West for inexpensive primary commodities as well as strategic strongholds against the USSR contributed greatly to the continuing political and economic instability of many areas in the region. The establishment of the franc zone in the former French colonies, keeping these countries tied to France, limited their economic expansion.[6] Yet, for African economic and at points political survival, these relations were often seen as necessary by African entities. Often, African countries had little choice whether or not to accept the aid and influence of countries which were so large militarily and economically.[7]

These events spurred several movements in Africa calling for African continental or regional unity and independence from these still overly influential former colonial powers. Yet, the struggle to survive while attempting to stabilize their political and economic situations made it difficult for Africa to close itself off from the pressures of the West. Africa maintained commodity trade with the former colonial powers and with the U.S. and received aid from these countries. For example, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, and Zaire (Congo) were considered key stronghold countries aided by the West as bolsters against communism. The unstable political situations and economic difficulties of these countries since independence is well-known, and their roles as pawns in the Cold War greatly contributed to this instability.

Japan's experience in dealing with the Cold War world held only a few similarities to those of Africa. Japan was also greatly affected by the Cold War power struggle. However, Japan was treated very differently than Africa by the United States and Europe. Large amounts of capital, goods, and technology flowed into the country while the United States supplied it with military protection. Japan also oddly benefitted both from the destruction of its infrastructure during World War II and from the technology it had gained from its rapid prewar industrialization. Both these factors enabled Japan to utilize capital given by the United States to build a new, modern postwar infrastructure to establish a firm foundation for rapid reindustrialization. The prewar oligarchical political system also formed a hierarchical power structure which led the way to a powerful postwar bureaucracy and dominant one-party legislative system.[8]

Beginning with the occupation of Japan by United States forces after World War II, Japan started to forge a strong if not always cordial

relationship with the U.S. Article IX in the post-World War II Japanese constitution stipulates that Japan will not support a military and will not participate in military activity abroad. As the Cold War intensified, Japan's dependence on the United States for its defense shaped Japan's relations with other countries along the lines of US and Western European policy.[9] Particularly in its giving of aid, Japan took an anti-communist strategic approach, concentrating its aid in countries allied with the US and Western Europe without interfering with the policies of these powers in the region.

This strategy worked until Japan grew so large economically that the U.S. began to protest against its economic policies which limited free trade. The U.S. often used the fact that the country was Japan's main protector in the Cold War to attempt to impel Japan into opening its economy to more imports. The push-pull relationship between the U.S. and Japan further strengthened Japan's resolve to be as indirect in its foreign policy making as possible so as to not incur the wrath of the United States while at the same time dealing with countries which possessed needed resource inputs or which had large import markets for Japanese goods, particularly important after the oil shocks of 1973-74. Japan's inactive foreign policy therefore enabled it to continue attaining its defense from the U.S. while dealing with most countries in a mainly economic manner.

Beginning in the late 1960's, as Japan ran large world trade surpluses and became one of the richest countries in the world, Japan showed its support of anticommunism by targeting its Official Development Assistance (ODA) at anticommunist countries such as Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Zaire, and Malawi.[10] Additionally, as Japan continued to run large trade surpluses in Africa (see Tables 1 and 2) in the 1960's, several countries invoked Article 35 of GATT and imposed trade restrictions on Japan. In 1965, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, and Nigeria began to restrict Japanese imports. Not coincidentally, Japan began giving yen loans to Africa in 1966, with Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda as recipients.[11]

Through its mainly economic foreign policy in Africa, then, Japan could secure natural resources and open markets to its products without becoming embroiled in political conflicts in the region that might bring it up against the policies of the Cold War powers of the U.S. and Western Europe.

The international context at the beginning of the Cold War contributed to the positions of both Africa and Japan in the world Cold War hierarchy. Whereas Africa became a Cold War battleground between East and West and a source of cheap commodity goods, Japan became a vital outpost for U.S. troops and a noncommunist anchor for the West in Asia as well as a source of cheap imports for the United States. Japan also had the internal drive to develop as rapidly as possible to become a powerful world player rather than be subsumed by the confrontational world system. Its status as useful tool to the U.S. and its complex bureaucratic governmental structure and drive to come back from the defeat of war combined to push Japan into the role as economic power.

However, as Japan became more economically powerful, it did begin to assert some independence from the United States in the pursuit of its own economic interests. This beginning of a separation from the United States was reinforced by the oil crises of 1973-74, when Japan realized that its dependence on other countries for vital resources meant that another country's economic value to Japan was more important than that country's alliance with the United States. Japan therefore quietly increased trade and aid to some African countries which were not on the best terms with the U.S. but which either possessed potentially expandable export markets or had resources Japan could import cheaply, illustrated by trade with Mozambique (see Table 1). Japan pursued these economic relations quietly and apolitically, concentrating economic interaction in a few African countries, and avoiding confrontation with Western policies. Japan's sense of vulnerability and concentration on gaining world economic power will be examined in the next section.

Table 1: Japan's Trade with Four African Countries 1955-76 (millions of yen)

	Zaire		Kenya		Tanzania		Mozambique	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
1955	1226	45	1685	498	4611	1349	213	165
1960	587	1399	7985	3209	3332	3436	663	1394
1965	1871	1374	9236	1998	3545	1943	813199	3938
1970	15,548	13,539	14,958	1679	7767	6504	13,282	8130
1971	22,582	9390	17,063	2917	6159	3202	13,068	8130
1972	14,852	8355	14,341	3038	6523	3532	11,863	9651
1973	13,813	22,115	19,827	6600	11,612	4467	10,705	6601
1974	19,646	31,659	30,291	7842	20,351	5047	10,679	24,262
1975	11,180	17,764	21,292	7794	16,060	3132	7072	18,796
1976	9962	25,632	29,975	7026	22,395	3752	3960	10,633

source: Bureau of Statistics, Prime Minister's Office, *Japan Statistical Yearbook,* 1975 and 1980.

Table 2: Japan's Foreign Trade by Area (billions of yen)

Year	Total		Asia		South America		Africa	
	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports	Imports
1955	723	889	302	324	53	37	74	22
1960	1460	1617	525	493	64	52	126	59
1965	3043	2941	990	983	89	140	294	127
1969	5756	5408	957	1650	173	273	415	353
1970	6954	6797	2181	2009	214	351	512	395
1971	8392	6909	2483	2354	286	312	719	347
1972	8806	7228	2491	2505	299	269	643	360
1973	10,031	10,404	3187	3753	385	356	850	475

source: Bureau of Statistics, Japan Prime Minister's Office, *Japan Statistical Yearbook*, 1975.

World Views

There exists a drive within Japan to become as strong as possible in order to be recognized as a powerful force in the world and to not be victimized by other large countries. According to Seizaburo Sato, the following principles have guided Japan's foreign policy for the past one hundred years:

1. A strong sense of belonging to Japan and the Japanese race coupled with deep-rooted feelings of inferiority;
2. Intense concern with improving the country's international status;
3. Deep anxiety over being isolated internationally;
4. Desire to conform to world trends;
5. Emotional commitment to Asia.[12]

Japan's strong nationalism combined with its feelings of international vulnerability and the perceived need to become strong economically to survive have driven Japan to develop an economic system which, although dependent on foreign sources of oil, coal, and other resources, and which has grown so rapidly by concentrating on the development of high-quality, inexpensive exports, has remained relatively closed to large amounts of noncommodity imports and foreign investment in Japan. Japan could maintain such a system because of its authoritative political culture and its usefulness to the United States during the Cold War. The U.S., although the main force behind the rules of international economic interactions as established in the Bretton Woods system, rarely cried out against Japan's far from free trade markets. Japan was more useful to the U.S. as a stable exporter of inexpensive goods than as an economically undeveloped entity that could fall prey to the claws of the communists.

As Shigeru Yoshida, one of the primary formulators of contemporary Japanese foreign policy, writes in 1957,

> ...Japan clearly must feed its 90 million people through trade. Given this, Japan's commercial ties naturally and necessarily stress America and Britain, which are the most economically affluent and technologically

> advanced countries, and those with which we historically have the closest ties....It is simply the fastest and most effective way to promote the interests of the Japanese people.[13]

Japan was driven to develop economically to quell its sense of vulnerability and protect itself from the interests of the superpowers. Japan's view of the world as a place where it must struggle to survive was also part of the reason Japan supported the policies of the Western powers without actively forming its own policies that might conflict with those of its trading partners and defenders. Japan protects itself due to its perceived vulnerability in the world system by maintaining an inactive political policy and concentrating on developing its own economic strength.

In contrast, although, as Nyong'o says, the colonial and Cold War legacy in Africa have hindered many African countries from making the state their own.[14] Several people in Africa have not merely sat back and watched Africa crumble. Discussions and debates as to how to deal with this continuing linkage with Europe and the United States, as well as how to develop particularly African nonconfrontational and nondictatorial economic and political systems, is ongoing. From Marxist scholars such as Samir Amin who call for Africa to form an alternative definition of the nation-state not based on Western conceptions of bourgeois leadership and the capitalist mode of production[15] to Ali Mazrui's calls for Africa to refind its own strong, unique history and base African political and economic structures upon it[16] to calls for pan-African unity as a means of forming a strong peaceful Africa,[17] scholars demonstrate the combination of Africa's subjugation by the international system and the empowerment, activism, and frustration that go along with lively, intense debate by Africans about possible strategies for their future. The desire to rise up, to change the unsatisfactory status quo, the disagreements about how a particularly African development path can be created, are discussions that were pursued intensely during the 1960's and 1970's and are still discussed by many on the continent.

These African and Japanese perspectives also determined the nature of the relations between these two entities at that time and established the groundwork for what these relations were to become in the

future. However, Japan's continued booming economic growth combined with the oil crises of the 1970's began a drive towards a somewhat more active economic role in Africa. The oil crises of the early 1970's and the resource nationalism exerted by developing countries at this time spurred in Japan feelings of "resource danger" (*shigenkikikan*) and therefore Japan began the drive to establish closer relations with primary commodity exporters. The continued feelings of vulnerability in Japan are demonstrated by Japan calling itself *shigenshōkoku*, or "few natural resources country."[18] Japan depended on the world for its industrial inputs and relied on its industrial outputs for maintenance of a strong position in the world system. Its foreign policy towards developing countries was based in this strategic need for natural resources.

Africa's options to limiting dependency on the European and American economic and political core were small. Africa's place in the international context as exporter of primary commodities could change little due to Africa's limited access to technology and the relative instability of the political systems and leaders in several African countries. At the same time, several African countries, to protect themselves against a new economic colonialism by newly-industrializing countries, exercised their right under GATT article 35 to restrict imports, and therefore exports to Africa from Japan were limited.[19] Although the Lomé Convention of 1975 banned the special trade rights established by former colonial powers, several African countries continued to have de facto tied relationships, particularly to France and Portugal. Therefore, Japan perceived African markets as difficult to enter.[20]

Additionally, economic ties with Africa have been concentrated in a few countries. Japan has always felt shut out of the francophone and lusophone countries, which continued to maintain nontariff barriers even after the 1975 Lomé Convention. Japan has few Africa specialists who are informed about these countries. Japan also concentrates its trade in countries which have large internal markets or large amounts of natural resources, like South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, and Zaire. Direct investment in Africa makes up only two percent of Japan's foreign investments, half of which from 1951 to 1981 was concentrated in Liberia to take advantage of its liberal tax and disclosure laws. The remaining investments are split between manufacturing ventures in countries with large domestic markets, like Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria or in

mining ventures in Niger, Zambia, Zaire, and Nigeria.[21]

Ninety percent of trade was concentrated in 11 countries: South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, Sudan, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Zaire, Mauritania, and Tanzania.[22] Aid was also highly concentrated in a few countries and geared towards Japanese strategic interests. Eight countries received 70 percent of ODA from 1960 to 1990.[23] Of these countries, Zaire, Zambia, and Niger are major suppliers of raw materials such as copper and uranium. In Madagascar, Japan has investments in the mining of chromium ore and in fishing. Sudan is a potent source of chromium. Kenya is pro-West, and imports ten times more Japanese goods than it exports to Japan. Tanzania is not as rich as other African entities in resources, but under Nyerere it represented the pan-Africanist opinion which called for African states to join together to seek freedom from dependency on the international economic and political system. By establishing economic ties with both Kenya and Tanzania, Japan could play both sides of the diplomatic fence, establishing alliances with countries not necessarily cordial with the West, which was important to Japan after the oil shocks in 1973-4. Japan maintained almost solely economic relations with countries such as Tanzania to make sure that no conflicts with the West were engendered.

Table 3: Japanese Bilateral Aid (ODA) to Africa
(in millions of US dollars)

Year	Total ODA to Africa	Share of Total ODA (%)
1960-66	.73	2.0
1967-69	8.10	8.2
1969	3.77	1.1
1970	8.15	2.2
1971	12.38	2.9
1972	5.01	1.0
1973	18.49	2.4
1974	36.23	4.1
1975	58.82	6.9
1976	45.93	6.1
1977	56.25	6.3
1978	105.49	6.9
1979	186.72	9.7
1980	222.91	11.4

Source: Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diplomatic Bluebook, 1981; *Development Assistance*, OECD-DAC, Paris, 1970

Table 4. Sectoral Breakdown of Japanese ODA to Africa
(percentage of commitments)

Year	Social Infrastructure	Economic Infrastructure	Production Sectors	Program Assistance
1970	1.4	69.4	29.2	--
1971	2.1	15.4	20.9	5.2
1972	2.9	20.4	21.7	5.5
1975	2.8	39.4	25.3	--
1980	8.5	60.6	24.4	--

(1) Social infrastructure includes education, health, population programs, public development and planning services, etc.
(2) Economic infrastructure and services includes transport, communications, river development, and energy.
(3) Production sectors include agriculture, industry, mining, construction, manufacturing, trade, banking and tourism.
(4) Program aid includes structural adjustment programs and concentrated country program assistance.

Source: OECD-DAC, *Development Assistance,* various reports, as collected by Nelson Noel Messone, *Japan's Foreign Aid to Africa: International and Domestic Determinants* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1994.

Building on the explanations given in the previous section, Japan's historical experience, world view, and ties to the United States and Europe propelled Japan to alleviate its fears of being cut off from needed natural resources to pursue mainly economic and quite distant relations with Africa. Japan did not want to become involved in Africa's political, national, and ethnic struggles. Japan served as a military outpost for the United States and as an ally who almost always voted with the

United States in international organizations such as the United Nations. Japan also wanted to maintain a peaceful, unobtrusive position in the world in order to avoid fears of its returned aggressiveness after the events of World War II. It therefore rarely pursued a proactive foreign policy, particularly in regions where powers such as Europe and the United States were already active.

Japan's View of Itself

Japan has had little policy interaction with developing nations, particularly with Africa. It concentrated its efforts on developing markets in the industrialized nations. Japan had another reason for staying away from the developing world. As Yoshida writes,

> The Asian and African nations...have relatively little organic interdependence with the economies of other countries...their leaders are putting their main efforts into politically and socially ridding these countries of colonialism and dependency, not into fostering economic relations with other countries. These leaders want to avoid aligning with one side or the other in the bipolar global setup and devote themselves to marshaling the energies of their people for the task of nation building. This might be termed passive neutrality....but their assertions of neutrality are not based on any particular economic or military strength.[24]

Japan had no interest in forming international relations with an Africa which it felt was dealing with struggles in which Japan did not want to participate. Japan had no need to take a stance in the struggle for independence and nation formation occurring in Africa, for it was secure in the strong ties and the military protection given to it by the United States.

Another reason for distant relations with Africa is that Japan feels much more affinity with the developed countries of the West than developing countries of Africa or even Asia. As Yoshida wrote in 1957:

> Japan today is actually more Western than Asian with respect to domestic politics, economics, industry, and social affairs....The Asian and African nations, by contrast, are still backward societies with low living standards and undeveloped industrial bases and economies.[25]

Related to Japan's world view, Japan considers itself more Western than Eastern, more developed than developing. Not only does this view protect Japan against being subsumed by large powers, for it pushes Japan to continue in its quest for world power and strength although through nonmilitary means, but it does go into a view of the Japanese nation as something special, a country that is able to overcome the barriers of development and become strong even after the huge defeat of World War II. This view of the Japanese nation as unique and extraordinary has fueled a hesitation to associate with developing countries that are unable to help themselves to pull ahead. With the exception of aid to countries suffering from famine or other disasters, Japan gives little aid to the poorest countries of Africa[26] and maintains relatively distant diplomatic relations with most countries of the continent. Japan's view of itself as a special case, as a country different from those developing countries who are unable to shine in the world system, has impelled it to see little commonality with countries of the developing world.

Japan began intensive industrialization in the late 1800's during the Meiji Era. The Japanese government was able to impel the Japanese people to come together and sacrifice the freedom and luxuries they may have otherwise been able to have for the sake of the nation's well-being. The government could pursue this route to development for two reasons: first, a large bureaucracy existed in Japan even during the Meiji Era that was capable of constructing and pursuing development policies that may have been politically hurtful to elected politicians. Japan was also run by an oligarchical group of ministers headed by the Emperor, all of whom were deeply respected in Japan and also were not elected officials. Second, the Meiji oligarchs perpetuated an ideology that, since Japan was a small island nation that perceived itself as vulnerable to the whims of the large powers, national strength and unity were vital to the nation's health.[27] Japan succeeded in developing rapidly at this time, which

reinforced the deep sense of nation that enabled the development to succeed. Masao Maruyama, a respected Japanese academic, also explains how this intense national pride fed Japan's fervid pursuit of victory during World War II.[28]

Although much has changed since World War II, the strong Japanese sense of nation still existed in the 1960's and 1970's as did the well-developed complex bureaucracy. Japan no longer had an Emperor-led government, and Japan suffered greatly from its defeat in the war and the humiliation of being occupied by the United States, yet Japan was still a nation full of national pride and strength. Japan was able to use this strong sense of nation and its well-organized bureaucratic structure to aid its second round of economic development, pushing Japan into the role of great economic power at this time.[29]

Japan has had great indirect effect on the international structure through its rapid growth utilizing an alternative development approach to that used by the United States and Europe. Japan did not develop by sticking to the free market capitalist principles espoused by the World Bank and IMF. Instead, Japan protected its vital markets and used a large, authoritative state apparatus to drive growth. Rather than focusing on uniform economically-oriented policies such as interest and exchange rate adjustment and the limiting of state spending, Japanese development focused on an active, strong state role as the primary factor to economic development and growth.[30] This focus in the literature on Japan is interesting, for Japan's international role has mainly been economic, not political, and yet its development concentrated on the political, an authoritative state, ruling the economic. Japan has demonstrated that there are many paths to development, not just the route followed by the United States and Europe. This reinforces Japan's sense of pride in itself.

The push to show the world that it was a powerful nation, that it was strong enough to overcome the barriers to its development, meant that Japan could see little commonality between itself and the nations of Africa. These were countries which, as a famous Japanese developmental economist says, cannot necessarily follow another country's model to develop.[31] The countries must find their own way. Therefore, Japan could justify its hesitation to become too close to the countries of Africa by promoting a policy of self-help. This policy also kept Japan from being too closely associated with the developing world, as Japan

considers itself a country as powerful and able as the countries of the West.

In 1974, Japanese Foreign Minister Kimura made a visit to five African countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Zaire, Tanzania, Egypt) and spoke against colonialism (*shokuminchishugihantai*) and for African ethnic and tribal freedom movements (*minzokukaihōundō*). He supported what he called economic Africanization and pledged that Japan would begin to expand efforts to understand Africa as well as increase Japan's economic cooperation to the region.[32] However, little substantially changed in Japan's policy towards Africa. Japan did begin giving Official Development Assistance to the region and increased the amount of trade, but political ties remained distant.

The main reason for this visit and expression of understanding of Africa's causes is difficult to tell. Kimura's words may have been mainly to ensure cordial relations between Japan and those countries that could provide needed resources, at a time when African countries had expressed dissatisfaction with Japanese economic policy in previous years and sharply limited the amount of imports allowed from Japan. Japan had responded to previous import restrictions by increasing its foreign aid to key countries in the region such as Nigeria, Zaire, Kenya, and Tanzania, and not coincidentally, following this action and the oil shocks of 1973-4, Foreign Minister Kimura visited Africa and spoke sympathetically about Africa's concerns.

Japanese policy towards Africa remained unobtrusive and almost solely economic in nature. Not only did Japan want to avoid being put in a situation where it would need to formulate a more concrete, active political foreign policy, but Japan was succeeding in attaining its goals with the policy towards Africa it was maintaining at that time. Japan could show the West that it was using its trade surplus not only for its domestic benefit but was greatly increasing the economic assistance given to developing countries. At the same time, Japan could establish its place in the world system as the giver of aid, as a strong economic force on a par with countries of the West, rather than a late-developing country with more in common with Africa than with the West. Foreign aid not only secured needed resources for Japan, but was a symbol that Japanese pride in itself as a nation was warranted, for it was a powerful player in the world economic system that was coming to the aid of the less developed

world.[33]

African aid recipients were also looking towards their strategic interests. These countries needed the funds which Japan was offering, and, although much of the aid was tied to agreements to contract Japanese companies to assist in the implementation of the project being funded, no political ties were suggested. However, it cannot be said that African countries viewed such nonpolitically-tied aid with relief for many authors see Japanese aid as a type of neo-mercantilism that would further bind Africa to its role as international provider of natural commodities and flood the continent with Japanese imports.[34]

Conclusion

The influence of the Cold War and colonial powers on Africa and Japan, Japan's world view, and Japan's view of itself have determined how Japan formed policy towards Africa in the 1960's and 1970's. Japan's wish to remain allied with the U.S. and receive its military protection and economic aid, its perceived need to remain strong to prevent being subsumed by the world's powers, and its view of itself as a unique country that had used its own special talents to become a great economic power, have worked together to maintain distant relations between Japan and Africa. Japan saw little in common with Africa and wanted to refrain from becoming involved in African political conflicts in which the Cold War powers were already embroiled.

Whether the economic relations that did exist between Japan and Africa were mutually beneficial is debatable. Japan continued to run huge surpluses in the region throughout the time period, taking away valuable foreign exchange from Africa. Japan did provide substantial amounts of aid to the region, although this aid was concentrated in few key countries and was often tied to contracts with Japanese companies. Japan's refusal to become involved in Africa's political problems also may have kept Africa from having a powerful non-Western ally with enough economic clout to help Africa against the whims of the U.S. and former colonial powers.

Yet, Japan's distant relations with Africa may have been more helpful to the region than previously thought. Japanese trade and aid with

Africa did provide economic activity without more political policies being imposed. Japan did mainly support Western allies in the region, and therefore its trade and aid were indirectly politically motivated, but Japan did not impose its own views on an Africa that was being pushed and pulled in many political directions both internally and externally.

Whether Japan's relations with Africa were helpful or hurtful, little changed in the context of the relations before or after the time period examined. More has been mentioned in Japan about Africa after the Cold War, as Japan is seeking a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council and has suffered even more criticism for its supposedly mercantilist policies. However, due to the reasons previously mentioned, Japan will probably never forge close relations with the nations of Africa.

Endnotes

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6.. Samir Amin, *Maldevelopment.* London: Zed Books, 1990.

7. *Ibid.*

8. One of the most famous Japanese writings arguing this point is Masao Maruyama, *Nihon no Shiso* (Japanese Thought). Tokyo: Iwanami Publishers, 1961.

9. Several books and articles have discussed this point. See: I.M. Destler, Hideo Sato, and Haruhiro Fukui, *The Textile Wrangle: Conflict in Japanese-American Relations, 1969-1971.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979; J.W. Dower, *Empire and Aftermath: Yoshida Shigeru and the Japanese Experience, 1878-1954.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.

10. Jun Morikawa, *Japan and Africa: Big Business and Diplomacy.* Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1997. Another reason for lack of economic interaction with francophone and lusophone countries is that Africa hesitated to trade with nonanglophone countries due to trade barriers and language difficulties.

11. Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Diplomatic Bluebook*, 1967.

12. Sato Seizaburo as quoted in Robert Scalapino, *Japan's Foreign Policy.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977.

13. Shigeru Yoshida, *Kaisō Jūnen* (Recollections of Ten Years). Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1957, vol. 1: 24-38, translated in *Japan Echo*, Volume 22 (Special Issue, 1995): 51-55.

14. Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, "Introduction," in Peter Anyang' Nyong'o, ed., *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa.* London: Zed Books, 1987: 24.

15. Samir Amin, *The Arab Nation.* London: Zed Press, 1978.

16. Ali Mazrui, *Cultural Forces in World Politics.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1990.

17. cf. Rupert Emerson, "Pan-Africanism," *International Organization* 16, 2 (Spring 1962): 275-290; Guy Martin, "Africa and the Ideology of Eurafrica: Neo-colonialism or Pan-Africanism?" *Journal of African Studies* 20, 2 *Modern* (June 1982): 221-238.

18. Hideo Oda, "Nihon no Afrika Seisaku" (Japan's Africa Policy), p. 84.

19. Inukai, "Why Aid and Why Not? Japan and Sub-Saharan Africa," p. 254.

20. Jide Owoeye, "Imperialist Capitalist Investments in Africa: The Japanese Model ," *African Studies Review* 15, 1 (1988): 34-40.

21. Owoeye, "Imperialist Capitalist Investments in Africa: The Japanese Model," p. 38.

22. Nelson Noel Messone, *Japan's Foreign Aid to Africa: International and Domestic Determinants.* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1994.

23. William Nester, "Japanese Neomercantilism toward Sub-Saharan Africa," *Africa Today* 38, 3 (1991): 31-51.

24. Ibid.

25. Yoshida, *Kaisō Jūnen*, p. 55.

26. Inukai, "Why Aid and Why Not? Japan and Sub-Saharan Africa" and Messone, *Japan's Foreign Aid to Africa: International and Domestic Determinants* discuss this point which is reinforced by aid statistics in the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Diplomatic Bluebook*, yearly.

27. Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985, p. 25.

28. Maruyama, *Nihon no Shiso.*

29. For an explanation of the process of this development that is controversial but with which this author concurs, see Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982.

30. Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987; Daniel K. Okimoto and Tadashi Inoguchi, eds., *The Political Economy of Japan, vol. 2, The Changing International Context.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988; Chalmers Johnson, *Japan: Who Governs?* New York, NY: W.W. Norton, 1995.

31. Kazumi Goto, "Beyond 'Structural Adjustment' and the 'East Asian Miracle': Development Management Reexamined," *Journal of Development Assistance 2,* 2 (March 1997): 1-21.

32. Oda, "Nihon no Afrika Seisaku," p. 85.

33. See Alan Rix, *Japan's Economic Aid Policy-Making and Politics.* London: Croom Helm, 1980.

34. cf. Owoeye, "Imperialist Capitalist Investments in Africa: The Japanese Model," and Nester, "Japanese Neomercanitilism toward Sub-Saharan Africa."